At both a national and international level, the images that charities, voluntary organisations, and NGOs choose to illustrate the need and suffering of their beneficiaries are frequently the sources of conflict. Charities need to balance a desire to ethically represent and empower their beneficiaries and service users, while competing in a crowded media landscape for attention and stimulating donations from an often irresponsive public.

The inherent power imbalances which exist between charities and the people they work for exacerbates this, with beneficiary voices often unheard.

In his seminar, Dr Dean will discuss some of the history of contentious fundraising images in a range of international causes, and present findings from several recent qualitative studies into the representation of homelessness in the UK.